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"Let There Be No Misunderstanding."

The first real test of the preparedness of our soldiers at the front is near at hand. It is perhaps very near at hand. In the fortunes of war this thing or that thing may occur; but the thing which cannot occur has been stated by the President of the republic in terms which admit of no double construction. Speaking for the people who are behind the American army at the front, President Wilson said to Germany fifteen weeks ago:

"Let there be no misunderstanding. Our present and immediate task is to win the war, and nothing shall turn us aside until it is accomplished. Every power and resource we possess, whether of men, of money, or of materials, is being devoted to that purpose until it is achieved."

The President has said at no time on the subject of war aims anything more pertinent with regard to the events that are imminent, or more inspiring to those upon whom the hopes and the prayers and the love of the whole country are now concentrated, than is contained in the foregoing passage from his address to Congress at the beginning of the present session.

"Our present and immediate task is to win the war, and nothing shall turn us aside until it is accomplished."

The sentiment also possesses considerable interest for an intelligent enemy beginning or threatening the greatest offensive of the war.

Outside the Breastworks.

It was in 1888 that WARREN MILLER "fell outside the breastworks." He had been nominated unanimously for Governor by the Republicans. HARRISON was running for President. HARRISON carried the State by 15,000 against CLEVELAND; MILLER lost to HILL by 20,000. The Platt men knew how to knave.

General HARRISON sent his condolences to MILLER in a message in which he called the Herkimer county politician the "intrepid leader who fell outside the breastworks." The skill and energy of PLATT were devoted thereafter to the effort to keep MILLER on the outside. He succeeded after struggles more bitter than any New York has since known.

Six years later MILLER tried for the nomination for Governor again. The year '92 had seen CLEVELAND's second election as President. PLATT had worked like a beaver in establishing his power in the Republican party, and when ROSCOE CONKLING's successor went out for the nomination this time it was recognized that the result would be decisive in the political fortunes of the two men. PLATT's candidate for the Governorship was LEVI P. MORTON, and his victory in the convention put the seal of absolute defeat on MILLER.

Two years later MILLER was ousted from the Big Four, the advisory committee of the Republican State Committee, in which he had sat with PLATT, DEWEY and LAUTERBACH. This was the end of WARREN MILLER as a force in State and national politics.

As a soldier WARREN MILLER earned promotion from private to Lieutenant for bravery on the field. At Winchester STONEWALL JACKSON captured him when General BANKS was defeated. JACKSON was subsequently forced back toward Richmond by General FREMONT's forces, and paroled the Yankee prisoner as he retired. Lieutenant MILLER went home to Fort Edward, and after entering the paper-making industry spent a year in Belgium studying the processes of manufacture there. On returning to this country he worked sixteen hours a day for ten years, most of the time heavily in debt, to get American paper makers to use the machines he invented and the scientific methods he advocated. To him was given the credit of reducing the price of wood pulp from fifteen to four and a half cents a pound.

In 1867 he got into politics through the accident of replacing a speaker who failed to keep his engagement. Six years later he went to the Legislature, in which he supported Governor THOMAS's reforms. He was in the House of Representatives in '81 when

CONKLING and PLATT resigned from the Senate after their quarrel with President GARFIELD over the appointment of WILLIAM H. ROBERTSON as Collector of the Port, the incident that gave to PLATT the name of "the too," although PLATT induced CONKLING to quit and appeal to the New York Legislature for reelection as a vindication of their course. Their hopes were not fulfilled and PLATT set to work to reestablish himself. He did it so completely that for years he ruled the Republican party as the Easy Boss, and eliminated MILLER from public life.

The history of Republican politics, national and State, for a quarter of a century, is bound up in the biography of WARREN MILLER, a man of courage, of force, of wit and of great accomplishments.

Spring in Germany.

Spring is a season of joy or despair, according to the fortunes of those to whom it comes; and in Germany militarism is creating, or trying to create, the artificial joyousness which the minds of the Germans must have. The people have given perhaps two million lives and fifty billions of money to a task that was to have been finished three springs ago. Loysally supporting the Junker ambitions, they have seen not only their sons and their money, but their national honor, disappear into the red whirlpool. Another budget for \$100 billions is on the table. The Germans are looking over the old men and the young boys. From the fields come the familiar smell of warming earth, ready for the ploughman, but the ploughman is himself earth at the foot of Hill 304, the key that would not turn.

It is a lonely spring for Germany, the fourth spring of sadness, of wondering about the great promised victories, of seeing untold men go away to war instead of into the fields. Memories rise of other verbal hopes: of April, 1915, when the War Lord was to burn his way with poison gas to the Channel ports; of February, 1916, when the Crown Prince was to take Verdun and end it all gloriously. Every wind of the new season brings a reminder of the great failures and what they cost.

The Russian victory is not enough to cheer a tired, thin people. A hungry man gains nothing by capturing a beggar. So the General Staff, efficient even unto death—somebody else's death—takes the ready envelope from the famous cabinet. In case of popular depression, it reads, strike at England! Tell the people again, for it is spring, that the hour has come! The plan worked before Ypres and before Verdun; and it is only fair to say that the Junkers did their best to keep the word given at home. At Ypres they had vapors fresh from Satan's own laboratory; at Verdun they had more war machinery than ever had been gathered at one place before. At Ypres they could not turn even the green Clematis, at Verdun they died in tiers, with the long faced Prince's reputation at the bottom of the mess.

This spring there is no real expectation in the minds of the German chiefs that they will reach the Channel. The Chiefs hope to capture the confidence of the depressed nation east of the Rhine. To win this, to galvanize once more the numbing figure of militarism, what price could be cheaper than a few divisions of common German soldiers?

There has to be a Spring Song in Germany. MENDELSSOHN'S is dead, so the Hymn of Hate must serve to soothe the nation's ragged nerves another little while.

The Attempt to Separate the Belgian Provinces.

Despite their intrigues and the use of the force which they had at their command the Germans' attempt to divide Belgium and to develop among the Flemish people a pro-German sentiment has failed.

From the time that they entered Belgium they evidently had this scheme in mind. General von BISSING in his rule of the country declared that the Flemings, "with their antagonistic attitude to the Walloons, will as a Germanic tribe constitute a strengthening of Germanism." At the beginning of the war Germany had apparently reason to believe that she would get some support from the Flemings, for the Flemish-Walloon nationality question was so acute as almost to threaten a disruption of the Belgian nation.

The Walloons, who live in the south, speak a French patois and have close affinities with the French, were making a strong fight against the growing ascendancy of the Flemings in the north, a kindred people to the Dutch. Some of the more aggressive Walloons had declared for annexation with France, and some of the Flemings had even sought German aid against the encroachment of the "Latin tide."

This appeared to the German mind a situation peculiarly favorable to reconciling the larger Belgian race with the German rule. The Germans did everything possible to encourage Flemish aspirations. They established a Flemish university at Ghent, for which the Flemings had agitated for years. They formed a Flemish party and took some of its "leaders" to Berlin to present a petition setting forth their desires to the German Chancellor. Then they constituted these leaders into a so-called Flemish congress, "Rat von Flandern." The whole thing looked so good that one of the Government organs came out with the declaration that Germany should make a separate peace with this "Rat von Flandern."

Recent developments show how the people saw the German hand working in all of these schemes. The

Flemings refused to attend the university at Ghent and almost the entire enrolment is made up of foreigners. The Flemish people denounced the "party" as in no way representing them and the "leaders" as traitors to the race and nation. When these "leaders" attempted to explain their position they were hissed and their meetings broken up. Despite the strong display of German military force riots and disturbances took place all over Belgium when the Germans banished three Belgian Judges who, in accordance with the laws of the kingdom, had ordered the arrest of certain men who had proclaimed the political independence of Flanders.

The Flemish people declared that these men were traitors to Belgium, that they were serving the German plan to turn Flanders over to Germany and they should have been tried by Belgian Judges. This manifestation of Flemish spirit was too much even for the German rulers of Belgium, and it is announced that they have abandoned, at least for the present, their scheme of trying to gain Belgium through a division of the Belgian people.

The remarkable feature of this effort is not so much its failure as that it was ever undertaken after the Belgian people had buried their differences and fought so valiantly as a united nation against the destruction of their homes and the wiping out of their kingdom. It is only another instance of the utter inability of the Germans to appreciate or understand any other people.

Certain Housecleaning Jobs Ahead.

That there are many and large communities in Middle West States wherein English is virtually a foreign language, where German and German alone is understood and spoken, may come as a surprise perhaps to many in the country, although long notorious in the States thus afflicted.

The heavy anti-American vote in the Wisconsin Senatorial primaries reveals nothing new in this respect. It only brings the deplorable fact to a wider American consciousness. In such localities, notably in Wisconsin and Nebraska, the overwhelming majority of children attend schools wherein German and German alone is taught, wherein the speaking of English is not only barred but punished, wherein German, and never American, national songs are sung, wherein many of the teachers are not even naturalized, and wherein many more have only gone so far in the naturalization process as "declaration of intent" stage which, under pernicious State laws, gives them access to the ballot box and thus to a formidable leverage for their undermining alien activities.

A clear understanding of all this undoubtedly was one of the impelling causes which moved Dr. NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER in his recent St. Louis address to insist with so much force on a single language standard for all elementary school instruction. By political intrigue and by political dragging of the approved Prussian variety there has been for years past a persistent effort to thrust the German language down the throats of our school children.

Not only should education be obligatory, but, as Dr. BUTLER so forcibly pointed out, it should also be made obligatory that the basic foundations of that education are kept in the language of the country. With us that language happens to be English. There is no room here for fundamental school instruction in any other tongue. Above all there is no room here for those elementary schools, whether parochial or private, where German alone is taught, with anti-American specialization.

The war has thrust many offensive housecleaning jobs upon us. Presumably it will lead us up with many more before it is ended. And of all these none is more pressing than the task of the housecleaning of these educational sewers of sedition which so long have been fouling the air of many American school rooms.

Noncombatants in Uniform.

The difficulties involved in the effort to segregate worthy and brave army officers dutifully performing their tasks in noncombatant units or details from despicable chair warmers who have obtained bomb proof jobs entitling them to wear honorable uniforms without exposing their hides to the numerous dangers on this subject we have printed. Now that Congress is likely to take the matter up and find out what the facts are, it is well to remember that not all the men in uniform who wear khaki but do not share the toll of the camps, the rigor of training, or the danger of the trenches, are impostors or slackers.

The noncombatant units of the army here and abroad were created and are maintained as essential parts of the war machine. The men in them do work that must be done if the army is to be successful in its mission. Without them the fighting men would be unable to do their duty. Much of their work, in the opinion of many critics, could as well be done by civilians; but army authorities generally reject this theory, holding that for the sake of discipline and to coordinate the various departments it is necessary to entrust these tasks to officers and men subject to military rule. This is true not only in the American army, but in every army.

Being of the army, it is obviously necessary that these men should obey the army regulations, and these prescribe exactly what the persons subject to them shall wear. Many officers and men assigned to duty away

from the scene of actual combat would wear civilian clothing if they were allowed to; and laxness in compelling them to wear uniforms has led to unpleasant and occasionally scandalous occurrences in the past.

Insistence on the wearing of uniforms is therefore not unwise, nor is a man's appearance in uniform while he does merely clerical work in a Washington office evidence that he seeks to deceive the casual observer as to the service he is performing, or attempts to seize a fame to which he is not entitled.

Thousands of officers and men doing desk duty, inspection duty and the like in this country are as eager to go to the front as the most ambitious volunteer who is with General Pershing; many of them have been bitterly disappointed by the frustration of their hope to see active service; not a few have sought to quit the army on account of their non-warlike employment; and many more would quit if they did not know that the work they do is of supreme importance and that the uniforms they wear are worthily worn.

These men deserve and receive honor. They are not to be condemned because alongside of them are a few despicable creatures who masquerade as soldiers and deliberately seek safe jobs simply because they are safe. Of such the country has unquestionably as many in proportion to the size of the army as any other country has. They present a problem that has not been solved anywhere. They merit the severest reprobation. Those who encourage them by protecting them, by providing jobs for them, by sheltering them, are as bad. Nothing that can be said of them is too severe.

But their presence in the army does not discredit the honest and sincere men who wear the uniform. It may be evidence that politicians have overloaded necessary departments with useless sons of influential constituents, or that in expanding the army we have been fooled about some of the men who have been enrolled on its roster.

The point is that no general indictment can be brought against the men in the noncombatant departments. Each case must be judged on its merits. For the slackers there must be no mercy; for the honorable men there must be no censure.

The Liberty Loan Committee has done a graceful and proper thing in accepting the city's offer of part of its most cherished pleasure ground for purposes of war exhibition and bond publicity. The sacrifice on the part of the city and the risk of detriment to park property would be considerable in ordinary times; in this national emergency it is a negligible factor. We have no doubt the trench exhibit will promote the sale of Liberty Bonds and will afford to suffer a slight and easily repairable detriment to its meadow land. It is altogether a satisfactory termination of a contest conducted on one side with unnecessary heat and supercilious vigor. We congratulate everybody—all around.

Germany announced the drive in advance with the idea that the world, trusting simply in Teuton falsehood, would not expect the offensive to occur.

Bulgarian troops are now on the western front.—The News.

The Yankee troops in France must remember that America is still officially at peace with Bulgaria.

Every little while Washington issues a threat which makes it seem probable that the laws making sedition a crime will soon be punished as severely as loyal citizens are.

Another tale of alleged misbehavior by American fighting men abroad has been proved to be false. Pretty soon the country will learn to assume that our men in foreign lands are as good as they are at home despite the activities of pro-German liars.

A German town rejoices.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: I am interested and pleased to read in your issue of March 22nd an article entitled "The Metric System and Its International Advantages" which appeared in THE SUN was very interesting, but it is to be hoped that we shall before long be favored with a similar presentation of the other side of the question.

While the opinions and desires of the scientists are worthy of all attention and consideration, those of the manufacturers are equally important; and are in a sense more closely associated with the industrial progress of the country.

The writer possesses voluminous data which to say the least demonstrate that the necessity for the compulsory adoption of the metric system is far from being acute. The arguments of the metric system advocates could be read with considerable more interest and greater liberality of mind if they could be read in the light of the statements presented in the facts in support thereof.

To cite just one example, the official organ of this propaganda for September 19 contains the following statement: "The United States Government is using the metric system almost exclusively in the manufacture of its planes. This is one general statement which cannot be supported by facts because the facts of the case are that the English system of measurements is being used, except in isolated cases, such as spark plug threads, where the metric system is desirable in order to effect interchangeability with some well established standard."

It is the paramount duty of the Government to leave industry as free and untrammelled as is possible under the circumstances, but I am sometimes led to feel that this important matter is not receiving all the attention to which it is entitled.

JAMES J. MOORE.
New York, March 22.

Scut.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: In reference to your article on Scut, Mr. Curley of Boston and his being called a "scut," I find that your philological department is in error. Scut is the curly end of a pig's tail. It comes from the Icelandic skut, meaning the stern, from skipta, meaning to cut out. The curly part of an Irish pig's tail is called the scut. You know there is a famous painting of a phillula bird sitting on a scut in the moonlight, and the title—but that's another story.

T. R.
Boston, Mass., March 22.

A Hymn Beyond Hate.

From the St. Louis Post-Dispatch.
I do not like the Kaiser—
A past, beyond a doubt;
I have no love for him—
Than to think that puts him out.

MONEY'S ENDLESS CHAIN.

Is It Economical to Remove some of the Links?

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: I think it worth our while to consider as a matter of fact that it is the duty of every one in civil life in America to-day to assist the Government by every means in his power; that it is his duty to buy all the Liberty bonds that his means will permit, or if he cannot afford to buy bonds, then all the war stamps that he can afford, so that he will do his share. I will not incur the charge of disloyalty if I venture to question the wisdom of the "thrifty" policy that is being inculcated by the Government in the campaign to stimulate the sale of the war stamps, the principle of which is that stamps shall be bought not out of the individual's surplus merely, but, if he has no surplus, out of the proceeds of his self-denial.

Those familiar with the history of marine architecture will recall that when it was proposed to build ships of iron the objectors phrased their opposition in this way: "A bar of iron cannot float; therefore a ship of iron cannot float." These of a speculative turn of mind may entertain themselves by discovering the fallacy in the logic. Iron cannot float, but iron ships do float. In the same way many seem to reason that if a policy of retrenchment may make an individual prosperous, a policy of universal retrenchment will necessarily make a whole nation prosperous. This is a mistake. It is not quite true that all industries are equally necessary in the economic fabric or that they render equal support to one another; nevertheless, it is undeniable that in a modern community they are more or less interdependent and that one cannot be affected adversely without all the rest being more or less adversely affected also. Now, while it may appear that by eliminating certain expenses entirely and thus eliminating certain industries entirely we shall at first have more money to spend on other things, stamps or bonds, I believe it to be true that when the economic wheel shall have come full circle, in consequence of such a policy, we shall have considerably less than we should otherwise have for that purpose, if we have anything at all.

I think we shall be in a better position, as a nation, if instead of looking to the income from his capital, undertakes to live on the capital itself. While the capital lasts he can live much better than he could on the income, but in a comparatively short time he has nothing, whereas had he been content with the income he might live a thousand years on the capital of his own industry.

To take a concrete instance: The speaker advocates "cutting out" the movies and investing the movie money in war stamps. I believe the better way would be not to "cut out" the movies but to take them in pretty much as before, contributing the admission money to the Government and enabling the picture house proprietor to make profit of which he in turn will give the Government a share in the form of a profit tax. The sum thus obtained may not be very great in a given case, but it will be continuous and in the aggregate it will, comparatively speaking, be very great.

What chance has the individual? And so to take a concrete instance: The speaker advocates "cutting out" the movies and investing the movie money in war stamps. I believe the better way would be not to "cut out" the movies but to take them in pretty much as before, contributing the admission money to the Government and enabling the picture house proprietor to make profit of which he in turn will give the Government a share in the form of a profit tax. The sum thus obtained may not be very great in a given case, but it will be continuous and in the aggregate it will, comparatively speaking, be very great.

The true policy would seem to be not to restrict commercial transactions but to make the Government a sharer in every such transaction, either by paying the tax decreed by law in connection therewith or by voluntarily taxing ourselves to the same effect.

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By restricting it, that the nation can find the means of financing the Government; to preach a policy of "thrift" by curtailing trade is to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs, because diminishing trade means diminishing incomes, unemployment, distress, to throw people out of work, to deprive the Government of its revenue, to injure, not help it.

New York, March 22. F. J. DUNSON.

THE METRIC SYSTEM.

A Word From One Not Convinced of Its Necessity.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: The article entitled "The Metric System and Its International Advantages" which appeared in THE SUN was very interesting, but it is to be hoped that we shall before long be favored with a similar presentation of the other side of the question.

While the opinions and desires of the scientists are worthy of all attention and consideration, those of the manufacturers are equally important; and are in a sense more closely associated with the industrial progress of the country.

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New York, March 22.

TRADE BRIEFS.

Smoked mussels are being used extensively for food in Holland. The mussels are said to have found favor among the Dutch consumers, and in view of the fact that the mussels are a welcome addition to the staple supplies.

A firm in French Indo-China wishes to communicate with American exporters of aniline, celluloid articles, camel hair, bedding, disinfectants and other goods. Electric lamp machinery is needed in England.

Chile presents a field for the sale of football shoes. A sample of the footwear in general use can be seen at the Custom House, this city. English shoes, retailing at about \$2 a pair, are popular, but there has been some difficulty in obtaining supplies and the moment is opportune for the introduction of American goods.

There is a market in Trinidad for second hand shoes and shoes. It has been impossible to get new shoes from Carriacou, the usual source of supply. Names of firms shipping cocoa and sugar can be obtained from the Foreign and Domestic Commerce Bureau, 234 Custom House, this city, by reference to File No. 9606.

Canadian dealers are in the market for deer bells.

The making machinery is wanted in Madagascar.

Grass orange crop numbered 44,000,000 in 1917. There were 45,000,000 men-darins grown. Definite figures for the lemon and citron crops are not available.

A Jamaican firm wishes to buy hand tools, hoes, nails, tin, machetes, cement, paint, laundry soap and bar iron.

Trucks for motor car upholstery are in demand in Canada.

Sprat fishing in the River Tay, near Dundee, Scotland, has proved more profitable during the present season than ever before. The catch was large and prices were anomalously high. The fisherman realized weekly profits of from \$600 to \$800 during the season.

Spring in France.

Spring winds now his budding way
Along the lanes of France,
And greening leaf and feathered spray
In sudden breezes dance.

While ruins where swift treading
Are hidden in their blossoming.

T. R.
That sacred soil from whence they rise
Gives to its seed new life,
And so shall it immortalize
Its sons that face the strife;

In sudden breezes dance,
That is the spring that comes to France,
Maurice Monna.

BRITISH SHIP LOSSES.

The Ratio Three Times as Large as Among French and Italian Vessels.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: That the great destruction of British ships is not due to any lack of adequate means of saving them is proved by the great difference in the ratios of losses in the British, French and Italian merchant marines.

The British losses for about a year have been about fifteen ships of over 1,000 tons a week in total, totaling of about 2,100 ships of all tonnages; two in about 900 in the French, and one in 450 in the Italian merchant marine.

The losses by the French and Italians are about one in 450, the British one in 140, or over three times as great. Preventing this excessive and unnecessary loss, which can be done, is one of the most important tasks of the war.

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CORNELIUS MARTIN.
New York, March 22.

CREDIT TO THE GENEROUS.

All the Rapid Transit Men Contributed to That Ambulance.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: An article which appeared in THE SUN of Sunday, March 10, entitled "Subway Men Give Ambulance to United States," creates the impression that the car was given by subway men only.

The facts are that it was given by the 15,000 members of the Brotherhood of Interborough Employees, and these men are employed on all the rapid transit lines and in all interborough shops.

The men working on the Manhattan division (elevated lines) and in the shops rear that they were not mentioned in the article. They certainly deserve as much credit as any group of men and have worked hard to make the affair the success that it was.

JOSEPH A. FREEMAN.
New York, March 22.

"ECONOMIC SERFDOM."

The President's Enigmatical Message to the New Jersey Democrats.

To THE EDITOR OF THE SUN.—Sir: When the President sent his message to the New Jersey Democrats, he said: "I am sending you a message of peace and good will."

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